

last few years, non-medical men, trained at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology under Sedgwick, have been making good as health officers in various parts of the country. Now through affiliation with Harvard University in the new School for Health Officers, the Institute will be able to further broaden the viewpoint of its students. These M. I. T. men have done well as health officers because they have been employed on a "full time" basis. Full time may not mean that all of a man's working day is given to the health department, but it does mean that all his time is given to public service, and that the exactions of a private practice can never crowd aside the public welfare.

It is apparent that the small city cannot afford to pay for the services of the "full time" trained health officer. In California we can meet the situation exactly as the educational authorities have done in the formation of union high schools. There can be no objection to the formation of union health districts within the counties. The health officers appointed under this plan would be county deputies for their several districts, as well as health officers for one or more cities within the district. The best feature of this plan is that it could be carried out without another act of legislature.

J. N. F.

#### CIVIL SERVICE AND PUBLIC HEALTH.

When a progressive city sets out to place its administrative offices on a basis of efficiency, the health office is only too often overlooked. It is, therefore, very gratifying to find the City of Oakland reorganizing its health department and placing at its head a Health Director chosen under civil service regulations. It indeed marks a new epoch in the public health work of a city when the administration demands that health officials shall give their entire time to the work and shall be specialists in preventive medicine. When Oakland's plan was first announced the skeptics said, "The salary offered will not hire an able man unless he has the privilege of practicing medicine at the same time," and "How can a Civil Service Commission made up of lawyers and business men choose a Health Director?" The number of applicants from distant parts of the United States showed that there are plenty of men who are eager for public service in preventive medicine even if salaried positions do not offer the financial possibilities of surgery or curative medicine. The Civil Service Commission recognized its limitations better than did the skeptics and appointed an advisory committee to draw up questions, mark answers, and pass upon experience and personal qualifications. This committee consisted of the Secretary of the State Board of Health, the Professor of Sanitary Engineering in the University of California, the Health Officer of Oakland, an Oakland physician, and the Director of the State Hygienic Laboratory. These men were glad to help place the

choice of health officials on a basis of executive ability and expert knowledge: The United States Public Health Service assisted by holding the examination in the eastern states and forwarding the papers.

The Director has the health of a splendid city in his charge and we wish him every success. Chosen on merit, he has our confidence, and we look to him for a constructive and efficient public health administration for Oakland. W. A. S.

#### PUBLIC HEALTH AND INTERFERENCE.

It seems a curious fatality to announce in a special public health number of the JOURNAL the fact that the Secretary of the State Board of Health has resigned his office because of the intolerable interference with his work by some petty-minded laymen who really have nothing to say about it but who have usurped the right to say how every dollar of the money spent by the Board of Health shall be expended. Were it not a matter of the greatest importance to the people of the state, it would be farcical in the extreme. Dr. Snow has for several years served the state as Secretary of the State Board of Health and has served it intelligently and faithfully and well; we certainly are sorry to see him obliged, by such petty and mutton-headed interference, to sever his connection with the health work of the state.

#### EMINENT MEDICAL AUTHORITY.

Most of us have laughed with *Life*. All of us have been disgusted with its malignant attacks on preventive medicine. But once in a while we have the chance to laugh at *Life*. On page 620 of the present volume is published a communication entitled "Rabies: An Exposé," signed by Charles E. Page, M. D., of Boston, which as a monumental mass of ignorant misinformation deserves more than passing attention. Naturally, after reading this stuff, the medical man would like to know the medical qualifications of the writer. The A. M. A. Directory contains the following record:

Page, Chas. E. (b.1840) -N.Y.\* (Y of P) 120 Tremont St., 10-3. We can forgive much ignorance to a man aged 73 who holds his license by virtue of years of practice, and whose medical school or graduation cannot be determined. His opinion ought to be about as valuable, and his scientific information about as accurate as that of the ordinary newspaper reporter at twenty per. In this instance, however, it happens that the newspaper information regarding the isolation of the rabies organism is correct, and the "doctor" is mistaken.

Negri, in 1903, discovered the bodies which bear his name, in the brains of rabid animals. Noguchi, in 1913, has succeeded in isolating these same bodies, or growing them on artificial media outside the animal brains. A little more attention to microbiology in "Dr." Page's reading would have showed him that there was nothing inconsistent in the newspaper statement. Your

true sentimentalist, however, does not weigh evidence, nor search for facts. The opportunity to say something was eagerly seized upon, and *Life* was silly enough to print without investigation. But what can we expect of a man who writes "Pasteur serum"?

As far as the rest of the article is concerned "it is to laugh." We have been bitten by hundreds of mosquitoes and have never had malaria; and (we blush to relate) have had bloody encounters with several fleas without contracting the plague. We have also been bitten by a dog and viewed the bite without apprehension, but that was before some kindfaced tourist from the East dumped a rabid dog into Southern California. At present we are bound to confess that, even if the dog assured us that he had brushed his teeth before biting us, we would hastily pour nitric acid on the bite, and "beat it" for the Pasteur Institute.

J. N. F.

#### SCHOOL OF HYGIENE AND SANITATION.

There exists at present no school of hygiene and sanitation on the Pacific Coast, a lack which we have every reason to believe will soon be supplied by the establishment of such a school in the University of California. The tardiness of the west in recognizing so important a field relating to the health of the public and in organizing an institution for the training of specialists in these lines, is more apparent than real, for the courses in public health given at the University are remarkably comprehensive. Indeed, these courses, which are described in a circular accessible to all who are interested, are so numerous and varied that the subjects making up a curriculum in public health are already quite completely covered. Comparing the number and variety of the courses offered with those in similar departments of eastern universities, we find that the University of California is in no particular behind them, and in some instances has more adequate facilities for instruction. At the present time the university provides instruction in hygiene for three classes of students. First: Students desiring to be taught the elementary principles of health conservation, both individual and public. Second: Students of vocations not directly associated with the conservation of public health, but who would be brought in close relation with some of its aspects. Third: Students desiring a provisional training as bacteriologists, health visitors, sanitary inspectors, or health officers.

For example: from two to five half-year courses are given under each of the following subdivisions: Communicable Diseases; Child Hygiene and Eugenics; Sanitary Engineering; Vital Statistics and Social Economics; Industrial Hygiene; Public Health Laboratory; Sanitary Inspection, and Public Health Administration. The above instruction is given in eleven different departments in the University.

Official recognition of this work as it is now done, executive authorization, and provision for a proper certificate or degree for students finishing

the outlined courses, are really all that is necessary for transforming what is now a curriculum into a veritable school of hygiene and sanitation at the university.

#### VERY IMPORTANT TO YOU!

Two very important and far reaching economic conditions have their beginning this year of 1914. One is the new income tax law and the other is the state "Workmen's Compensation, Insurance and Safety Act," which goes into effect January 1st. In regard to the income tax, every physician should carefully study his own income and more particularly his own expenses. Under the law, expenses necessary for the conduct of one's occupation may be deducted from the gross income; no small part of a physician's expenses are those required by the nature of his occupation and as such are not to be included in his taxable income. The *Journal* of the A. M. A., in a recent issue, had an excellent editorial on this subject and particularly emphasized the fact that the law will have one good effect upon physicians, at least, for it will force them to be more accurate in the matter of their accounts. It is probably true that a good many doctors do not know either the exact amount of their earnings or the amount they spend as a legitimate cost of doing business. In the smaller towns the office is often in the home; some portion of the rent should be allowed. Some portion or all of the telephone charges, cost of running an automobile, etc., should certainly be charged off as well as books, journals, drugs and supplies, etc., and of course all unpaid accounts. This matter should be given careful thought and accurate accounts should be kept. Care in business methods will secure an increase in the income of any physician and the income tax law will undoubtedly force a more careful and systematic method of keeping the physician's accounts.

#### "SQUEEZE THE DOCTOR" AGAIN!

When commercialism comes into contact with professionalism, it almost invariably wins out. Heretofore we have had to fight commercialism in the shape of contract practice as organized by private enterprise and conducted more or less on the retail plan. With the coming of the "Workmen's Compensation, Insurance and Safety Act," however, we are confronted by commercialism on a wholesale scale and contract practice extended to the limit. The law is very complex and far reaching and it will take some time to find out exactly what it really means in many ways and just how it is going to work out. Some few essential points are pretty clear, however. All employees, except a few classes, must be cared for by the employer in the event of injury by accident and the salary must be paid during forced absence from work. Of course, a considerable number of insurance companies will be in the field to write policies insuring the employer against loss; the employer will pay a certain fee to the company and in the event that any employe is injured or killed, the insurance